

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A branching pipe joint ~~(181) for distributing a refrigerant flowing within a main pipe (51, 53) to two flows,~~ comprising:
  - a substantially Y-pipe shaped branch part ~~(182) comprising including~~ an inlet pipe part ~~(182a) wherethrough flows the~~ through which a refrigerant ~~that~~ flows in from said a main pipe, and a first outlet pipe part ~~(182b)~~ and a second outlet pipe part ~~(182e)~~ ~~wherethrough~~ through which flows the refrigerant along a first direction ~~(A)~~, which is ~~the~~ a flow direction of the refrigerant that flows through said inlet pipe part, and along said first direction in ~~directions~~ paths substantially symmetric to a centerline ~~(O-O)~~ of said inlet pipe part;
  - a first branch nozzle part ~~(183)~~ connected to said first outlet pipe part and extending along said first direction;
  - a second branch nozzle part ~~(184)~~ connected to said second outlet pipe part and extending along said first direction; and
  - a first branch pipe ~~(186) that is a pipe member, wherein one with an end part is~~ connected to a tip part of said first branch nozzle during plumbing work, ~~and that is~~ said first branch pipe being bent so that ~~the other~~ another end part faces a direction that intersects said first direction in a state in which said first branch pipe is connected to said first branch nozzle part,

~~wherein,~~

said first branch nozzle part and said second branch nozzle part ~~are being~~ disposed so that ~~the~~ a spacing (S) between ~~the~~ a portion of ~~the~~ said tip part of said first branch nozzle part nearest ~~said~~ a second branch nozzle part side and ~~the~~ a portion of said second branch nozzle part nearest said tip part of said first branch nozzle part is less than or equal to 40 mm.

2. (Currently Amended) A The branching pipe joint (181) as recited in ~~Claim~~ claim 1, wherein

said first branch pipe (186) is ~~capable of~~ configured for connecting to said first branch nozzle part (183) by brazing; and

said spacing (S) is greater than or equal to 7 mm.

3. (Currently Amended) A The branching pipe joint (181) as recited in ~~Claim 1~~ or Claim 2 claim 1, wherein

~~the other~~ said another end part of said first branch pipe (186) ~~comprises~~ has a first reducer pipe connecting part (186a), and wherein ~~the~~ a pipe diameter changes in steps.

4. (Currently Amended) A The branching pipe joint (181) as recited in ~~any one claim of Claim 1 through Claim 3~~ claim 1, wherein

~~the~~ a tip part of said second branch nozzle part (184) ~~comprises~~ has a second reducer pipe connecting part (184a) that protrudes further than ~~the~~ said tip part of said first branch nozzle part (183) toward said first direction ~~(A) side~~ and wherein ~~the~~ a pipe diameter changes in steps.

5. (Currently Amended) A The branching pipe joint (181) as recited in ~~any one~~  
~~claim of Claim 1 through Claim 3~~ claim 1, further comprising[[:] ]

a second branch pipe (187) ~~that is a pipe member wherein one~~ having an end part is  
connected during plumbing work to said second branch nozzle part (184), ~~comprising said~~  
second branch pipe including a second reducer pipe connecting part (187a) ~~at the other~~  
another end part wherein the with a pipe diameter changes changing in steps, and extending  
along said first direction (A) in a state connected to said second branch nozzle part.

6. (Currently Amended) An air conditioner (1), comprising:  
at least one indoor unit (3);  
a plurality of outdoor units (2);  
a union connecting piping (51) that serves as a main pipe extending from said indoor  
unit to said plurality of outdoor units;  
at least one branching pipe joint (181), as recited in ~~any one claim of Claim 1 through~~  
~~Claim 5~~ claim 1, ~~that is~~ said at least one branching pipe joint being connected to said union  
connecting piping in accordance with a number of said outdoor units and ~~that distributes the~~  
distributing a flow of a refrigerant to two flows; and  
a plurality of unit branch pipings (54) that each connects said at least one branching  
pipe joint to a connection port (21, 22) of one of said outdoor units.

7. (New) The branching pipe joint as recited in claim 3, wherein

a tip part of said second branch nozzle part has a second reducer pipe connecting part that protrudes further than said tip part of said first branch nozzle part toward said first direction and wherein a pipe diameter changes in steps.

8 (New) The branching pipe joint as recited in claim 3, further comprising

a second branch pipe having an end connected during plumbing work to said second branch nozzle part, said second branch pipe including a second reducer pipe connecting part at another end with a pipe diameter changing in steps, and extending along said first direction in a state connected to said second branch nozzle part.

9. (New) An air conditioner, comprising:  
at least one indoor unit;  
a plurality of outdoor units;  
a union connecting piping that serves as a main pipe extending from said indoor unit to said plurality of outdoor units;  
at least one branching pipe joint, as recited in claim 3, said at least one branching pipe joint being connected to said union connecting piping in accordance with a number of said outdoor units and distributing a flow of a refrigerant to two flows; and  
a plurality of unit branch pipings that each connects said at least one branching pipe joint to a connection port of one of said outdoor units.

10. (New) An air conditioner, comprising:

at least one indoor unit;

a plurality of outdoor units;

a union connecting piping that serves as a main pipe extending from said indoor unit to said plurality of outdoor units;

at least one branching pipe joint, as recited in claim 5, said at least one branching pipe joint being connected to said union connecting piping in accordance with a number of said outdoor units and distributing a flow of a refrigerant to two flows; and

a plurality of unit branch pipings that each connects said at least one branching pipe joint to a connection port of one of said outdoor units.

11. (New) The branching pipe joint as recited in claim 2, wherein said another end of said first branch pipe has a first reducer pipe connecting part, and wherein a pipe diameter changes in steps.

12. (New) The branching pipe joint as recited in claim 2, wherein a tip part of said second branch nozzle part has a second reducer pipe connecting part that protrudes further than said tip part of said first branch nozzle part toward said first direction and wherein a pipe diameter changes in steps.

13 (New) The branching pipe joint as recited in claim 2, further comprising

a second branch pipe having an end connected during plumbing work to said second branch nozzle part, said second branch pipe including a second reducer pipe connecting part

another end with a pipe diameter changing in steps, and extending along said first direction in a state connected to said second branch nozzle part.

14. (New) An air conditioner, comprising:
- at least one indoor unit;
  - a plurality of outdoor units;
  - a union connecting piping that serves as a main pipe extending from said indoor unit to said plurality of outdoor units;
  - at least one branching pipe joint, as recited in claim 2, said at least one branching pipe joint being connected to said union connecting piping in accordance with a number of said outdoor units and distributing a flow of a refrigerant to two flows; and
  - a plurality of unit branch pipings that each connects said at least one branching pipe joint to a connection port of one of said outdoor units.